

**PATENT CLAIMS**

1. A method of thawing meat frozen in meat blocks, comprising an apparatus for initial separation of the meat block before the meat block is placed  
5 in a rotating container, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that pressure is applied to the meat block (1) before it is treated in the rotating container (7), said pressure initiating a separation process of the meat block (1) into individual pieces (2).
- 10 2. A method according to claim 1, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that pressure is applied over the diagonals of the meat block (1).
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that package is removed before the meat block (1) is placed in the rotating container  
15 (7).
4. An apparatus for performing the method, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that it comprises a number of pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) which either cooperate in pairs or cooperate with a firm opposite face for applying pressure to the meat block  
20 (1).
5. An apparatus according to claim 4, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that the faces of the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) facing toward the meat block (1) are plane.
- 25 6. An apparatus according to claim 4, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that the faces of the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) facing toward the meat block (1) comprise elevations or depressions.
7. An apparatus according to claim 4, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that the  
30 faces of the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) facing toward the meat block (1) are provided with an outwardly inclined elevation in at least one corner.

8. An apparatus according to claim 4, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that the faces of the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) facing toward the meat block (1) are provided with depressions to receive the corners of the meat block (1).
- 5 9. An apparatus according to claim 4 or 8, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) are positioned such that they apply a pressure to the meat block (1) over the diagonal or diagonals of the meat block (1).
- 10 10. An apparatus according to claims 4 – 9, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that it comprises means for detecting and/or removing pieces of metal.